

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

11-75

ORLEANS

EAS.611

Town/City: Eastham

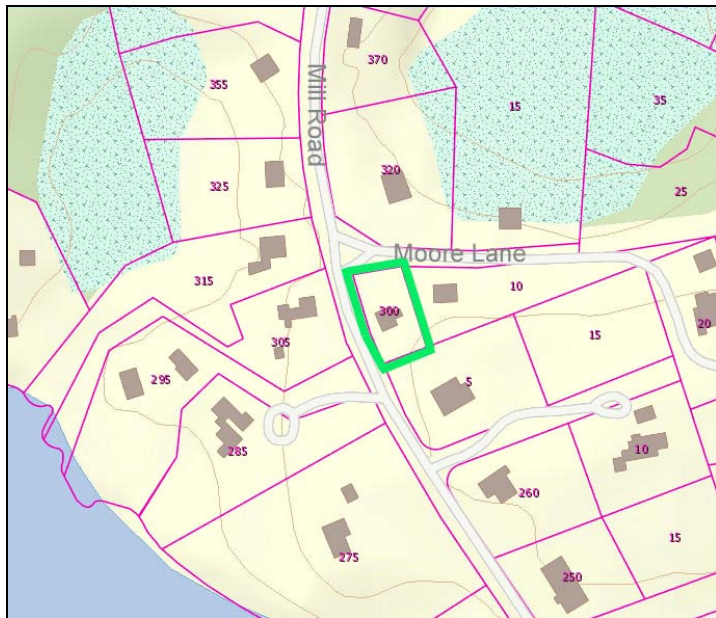
Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Eastham Center

Photograph



View from northwest.

Locus Map (north at top)



Recorded by: Larson Fisher Associates with Kathryn Grover

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date: April 2013

Address: 300 Mill Road

Historic Name:

Uses: Present: single-family residence

Original: single-family residence

Date of Construction: 1920

Source: town records

Style/Form: Bungalow

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: concrete block

Wall/Trim: wood shingle/wood trim

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: none

Major Alterations (*with dates*): reconfigured front porch section (2011)

Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.2 acre

Setting: The subject property is located on the east side of Mill Road and is surrounded by single family residences.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

300 MILL ROAD

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

This small one-story cottage was substantially remodeled, on both the interior and exterior, in 2011. This involved removing and rebuilding the entire full front porch section (including a small room that had been enclosed previously).¹ Originally it had a separate roof and a central front entrance. Today, the entrance is on the north side of that section and the roof has been raised so as to continue unbroken from the main roof, creating a bungalow form. (The contrast between the main house roof and the new extended one is visible in the photographs.) An original small rear ell, with cross-hipped roof is recessed from both side facades. All the windows were replaced, those in the bedrooms with casement windows (configured to look like double hung) to meet current egress standards, and those in the kitchen area to accommodate counters on the interior. Upper story windows in the gable peaks have been enlarged and there are three slider type windows in the rebuilt front section in an asymmetrical arrangement. The entire dwelling is clad with wood shingles. There is a small brick center chimney. In 2012 a wood deck was added that wraps around from the north side to the rear ell and connects with the newer stairs to the north side front entry.²

A wood rail fence extends along the front (west) property line and the north side lot line. The lot has both coniferous and deciduous shrubs in the front yard, and mature trees behind the house.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Mill Road does not appear on Eastham maps through 1910, and though the 1880 Barnstable County atlas shows several dwellings in the area, neither the 1900 nor 1910 maps show these structures. By 1930 the land on which 300 Mill Road sits was owned by Tamson A. Clark Nickerson, and it may be that the "M. Nickerson" shown with dwellings in the Mill Road area on the 1880 map was actually "N. Nickerson," or Nathan B. Nickerson (1826-1890), her father-in-law; it might also have been Myrick D. Nickerson (1827-1907), Nathan B. Nickerson's brother.

Nathan B. Nickerson was a mariner, the son of Samuel and Rowena Nickerson, and by 1870 he and his wife Phebe Horton Nickerson had five children and \$600 in real property. Censuses from 1850 forward enumerate first his father's and then his household next to that of Hatsel and Sally Nickerson, probably Samuel Nickerson's brother. Nathan Nickerson died in 1890. The couple's youngest son, William Horton Nickerson, was born in 1867 and was working as a laborer in May 1892 when he married Tamson A. Clark, daughter of John A. and Tamson A. Clark of Eastham. Phebe Horton Nickerson died in Provincetown in November 1892, and in October 1893 the administrator of her estate sold land "on the road that leads between the ponds"—now Samoset Road—"together with the wooden Dwelling House thereon erected in the year 1855" to her son William Horton Nickerson for \$300.³ This was almost certainly the house labeled "W. H. Nickerson" on the south side of Samoset Road on the 1900 and 1910 maps. But deeds for the 300 Mill Road property establish that these Nickersons also owned land north of Samoset Road.

William H. Nickerson died in 1912, and his widow continued to live in the Samoset Road house, as the 1929 directory documents. In 1931 she was taxed on her Samoset Road home and garage, an outbuilding, another house valued at \$1500, and its garage, the "old post office," her 3.75-acre homestead lot, and 18.5 acres in other lots. In that same year the widow Nickerson sold land and buildings on the site of 300 Mill Road to Georgia A. McCray with the vague proviso "that the repairs and changes now contemplated will be completed within three months from date."⁴ Whether the repairs were to be made to an existing house at 300 Mill Road—probably the second house Tamson Nickerson owned in 1931—is unknown.

Georgia Atlanta Clark McCray was born in Dennis in 1910, the daughter of Chatham surfman Edward Clark and his wife Minnie Brown West. She married battleship fireman William McCray by 1929; that year the directory shows the couple living on Samoset Road in Eastham. The 1930 census shows them as renters with their young sons William Jr. and Everett. In 1937, six years after his wife bought the Mill Road property from Tamson Nickerson, William McCray is shown in Eastham tax records with a house valued at \$1000, a garage valued at \$30, a 0.2-acre homestead lot, and a cow.

In August 1939 the McCrays sold 300 Mill Road to Thomas S. Brown, an ice dealer and native of Nova Scotia.⁵ When he crossed into the United States at Vanceboro, Maine, in February 1928, he stated that he was bound for Orleans, was married, and had lived in the United States once before, from 1920 to 1926. The 1929 directory shows him as an ice dealer living on King's Highway, and the 1930 census shows him renting there with his wife Jemima Mary (sometimes shown as May or Mae), who had come to the United States from Nova Scotia in 1920. By 1940 the census enumerated him, his wife, and their ten-year-old son Francis on Mill Road; Brown was then working in road construction. Tax records for 1947 show Brown with a house valued at \$1000 and the .2-acre house lot.

¹ Town of Eastham, Building Department records, building permit dated Feb. 15, 2011.

² Ibid, building permit for a wood deck dated March 27, 2012.

³ George H. Smith, Provincetown, administrator estate Phebe Nickerson, to William Horton Nickerson, 9 October 1893, Barnstable County Registry of Deeds (BCD) 209:93

⁴ Tamson A. Nickerson to Georgia A. McCray, 3 June 1931, BCD 482:67.

⁵ Georgia A. McCray to Thomas S. Brown, 2 August 1939, BCD 555:387.

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By August 1970 Thomas S. Brown had died, and his widow transferred title to the 300 Mill Road property to her son Francis, who lived in Orleans and worked as a right-of-way manager for New England Telephone. Two years later Francis Brown sold the property to John A. and Constance L. Cunningham, who lived on Knowles Road and owned the property for the next seventeen years. Current owner, Frederica Kelly of Amherst, bought 300 Mill Road in 1993.⁶

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⁶ Jemima Mary Brown (aka May J. Brown) to Francis S. Brown, Orleans, 24 August 1970, BCD 1482:212; Francis S. Brown, Orleans, to John A. and Constance L. Cunningham, Knowles Road, 18 February 1972, BCD 1615:292; Karen Morgan, 300 Mill Road, to Frederica Kelly, Amherst, 15 December 1993, BCD 9038:326.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

(credit Larson Fisher Associates, 2012-2013 unless otherwise noted)



View from southwest.